

D 2006--36/37

FACULTY *of* MUSIC



2005-2006

WHERE GREAT MUSIC MEETS GREAT MINDS

Saturday, April 8, 2006
7:30 pm. MacMillan Theatre

University of Toronto Faculty of Music
Presents

Wind Ensemble
Gillian MacKay, conductor

PROGRAM

Dmitri Shostakovich
1906-1975
ed. H. Robert Reynolds

Folk Dances

Percy Grainger
1882-1961

Children's March: "Over the Hills and Far Away"

Brian Cherney
b. 1942

Quelques espaces entre les anges et la terre (2005)

Premiere performance

Dr. Cherney is the Michael and Sonja Koerner

Distinguished Visitor in Composition

- INTERMISSION -

Igor Stravinsky
1882-1971

Circus Polka (composed for a young elephant)

Leonard Bernstein
1918-1990
Trans. Ian Polster

Symphonic Dance Music from "West Side Story"

Scherzo

Mambo

Cha-Cha

Fugue (Cool)

Philip Sparke
b. 1951

Dance Movements

Ritmico

Molto vivo (for the Woodwinds)

Lento (for the Brass)

Molto ritmico



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PROGRAM NOTES

Folk Dances

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH

Shostakovich crafted this set of Russian folk dances into an exciting showpiece which gains tempo and energy as it progresses. Originally scored for winds by a Russian military musician named Vakhutinsky for use in the military band system, this piece has become a favourite concert opener all over the world because of its happy folk melodies, galloping tempi, and rhythmic exuberance. It features all sections of this ensemble, and highlights the dynamic and direct energy of the percussion section, the sparkling vigour of the brass, and the virtuosity of the woodwinds.

Children's March: "Over the Hills and Far Away"

PERCY GRAINGER

This piece is one of several works Grainger created in the highly productive period following his emigration to America during World War I. Scored in 1919, it is one of the earliest wind band scores to include piano. Many of Grainger's subsequent scores also call for this instrument. Like the *Gumsucker's March* which this ensemble performed in October, *Children's March* contains

original musical material, although the melody is very clearly influenced by Grainger's study of English folk song. *Children's March* is an excellent study in instrumental colour, and helped to establish Grainger as one of the first significant composers for winds. Grainger was a member of the U.S. Army Band during his first years in America, and normally played oboe, saxophone, or tenor sarrusophone. It was first performed by this band, with Grainger at the piano.

Quelques espaces entre les anges et la terre (2005)

BRIAN CHERNEY

Notes by the composer

Quelques espaces entre les anges et la terre for large wind ensemble and percussion was commissioned by the Faculty of Music of the University of Toronto especially for performance during my visit to the Faculty in April 2006 as the *Michael and Sonja Koerner Distinguished Visitor in Composition*. Since I had written a work for wind ensemble and percussion many years ago, in 1982, to be exact (*In the Stillness Between...*), I thought it would be interesting to write for a very similar ensemble again after all these years, given such a wonderful opportunity.

The title of the new piece suggests one of its central concerns: how registral spaces might be filled with a variety of colours and textures and how these spaces might relate to each other. The title also hints at the main poetic inspiration for the piece—the first of the *Duino Elegies* of Rilke, which explores, among other “themes”, the nature of the relationship between the human sphere of life and, in Rilke’s words, “the higher order of reality” as symbolized by the angel of his poetic imagination.

BRIAN CHERNEY (b. 1942, Peterborough, ON) studied composition with Samuel Dolin at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto and with John Weinzwieg at the University of Toronto where he received degrees in both composition (M. Mus.) and musicology (Ph.D.). In 1966 and 1969 he attended the Internationale Ferienkurse für Neue Musik in Darmstadt, West Germany, where he attended lectures given by Ligeti, Stockhausen and Kagel, among others.

His music has been performed and broadcast throughout Canada and in the United States, South America, Japan, Europe and Israel. He has received commissions from many organizations and individuals over the years, including the Stratford Festival, the Société de musique contemporaine du Québec, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, the Alliance for Canadian New Music Projects, the York Winds, the Canadian Jewish Congress, the Eckhardt-Gramatté National Competition for the Performance of Canadian Music, the Esprit Orchestra, Rivka Golani, Louis Philippe Pelletier, Lawrence Cherney, John Grew and Joseph Petric.

Both Cherney’s *String Trio* (1976) and his orchestral work *Into the Distant Stillness* (1984) were ‘recommended’ at the International Rostrum of Composers in Paris, the former tying for first place.

In 1985 he was awarded the Jules Léger Prize for New Chamber Music for *River of Fire*, a work for oboe d’amore and harp. Another recent work, the String Quartet No. 3, was performed by the Raphael String Quartet in Hilversum, Holland, in 1986. Early in 1988, on a Canadian tour, *In the Stillness of the Summer Wind* for string quartet and oboe was performed by oboist Lawrence Cherney and the Chilingirian String Quartet. Cherney has recently completed a piece for the group Trio Basso of West Germany.

Cherney was influenced by Bartók and Weinzwieg during the early 1960’s and later by such composers as Ligeti, Crumb, Lutoslawski, Messiaen and Carter. In recent years he has developed a primarily evocative and poetic personal style based on a coherent harmonic language and careful attention to temporal proportions. Certain kinds of music often recur, either literally or in an altered version, from one piece to another in cycles of interconnected pieces. Also, many pieces contain direct quotations from, or veiled allusions to other, usually tonal music.

Since 1972 he has been on the staff of the Faculty of Music at McGill University in Montréal, where he is now Professor of Music. He teaches composition, analysis and twentieth-century music history.

Circus Polka (composed for a young elephant)

IGOR STRAVINSKY

In 1942 Stravinsky, newly arrived in America from Europe, received a commission from an odd consortium - choreographer George Balanchine and the Ringling Brothers Circus requested a piece to accompany an elephant ballet. Originally scored for professional circus band, the scoring lacks some of the lower and darker colours normally used in a wind ensemble, such as tenor saxophone,

bassoon, bass clarinet, and 3rd and 4th horn. The orchestration and the relatively high range create a bright, exciting, almost brittle colour which would have cut through the noise of an excited crowd and been audible throughout the circus arena. Toward the end of the piece, listen for an extended (and slighted twisted) quotation from Schubert's *Marche Militaire*. The original prima ballerina for this work was an elephant named Modoc, although her colleague Bessie later became well-known for her own interpretation.

Symphonic Dance Music from "West Side Story"

LEONARD BERNSTEIN

Music from Bernstein and Sondheim's *West Side Story* is some of the best-loved American music in existence. Stimulated by a challenge from choreographer Jerome Robbins to create a modernized version of *Romeo and Juliet*, Leonard Bernstein began working with Robbins on concepts for *West Side Story* in 1949, and the show opened on Broadway in 1957. Here Shakespeare's Montague and Capulet families become warring American and Puerto Rican gangs on the West Side of New York City. The first dance is taken from the Jets' opening number as they identify their turf in the neighbourhood. The *Mambo* and the *Cha-Cha* happen at the local dance where Tony and Maria first meet. The *Fugue* (Cool) is the dance to which the Jets attempt to control their rage and thirst for revenge when Riff, their leader, is killed in a rumble. Music from *West Side Story* has provided inspiration for dancers and lovers for over fifty years. Significantly, it also provided direct inspiration for the composer of the following piece, *Dance Movements*.

Dance Movements PHILIP SPARKE

Briton Philip Sparke has a well-established reputation as a first-rate composer for brass bands. He has also become respected for his compositions for wind ensemble and concert band. *Dance Movements* was commissioned by the U.S. Air Force Band in 1996, and is scored for full wind ensemble, including piano and double bass, continuing the tradition begun by Grainger in the early 20th century. It also includes harp, which is less commonly included in wind ensemble scoring, and 'cello, which is very rare, but which adds wonderful warmth to the beginning of the tenor sound in the group. In his own notes for the piece, Sparke names both Stravinsky and Bernstein as influences on his music in general and on this work specifically. This was Sparke's first major wind work to include piano and harp, and he was influenced by Stravinsky's scoring of his *Symphony in Three Movements*, which also featured these two instruments. The first movement has a latin dance feel to it, and the second, for woodwinds, sounds like English country dance, using a melody which Sparke says "plagued" him for some time before it was written. The third movement is a slow, dramatic chorale for brass choir, and clearly demonstrates Sparke's mastery of brass writing. The fourth movement leaps off the stage with tremendous rhythmic energy, led by the percussion section. It contains some exceptionally exuberant melodic material. Here the influence of Bernstein is directly heard, and documented by Sparke: "...the fourth movement has, I hope, cured me of a ten-year fascination, almost obsession, with the music of Leonard Bernstein and I will readily admit that it owes its existence to the fantastic dance music in *West Side Story*."

Program notes by Gillian MacKay, except for *Quelques espaces entre les anges et la terre*, notes by Brian Cherney

WIND ENSEMBLE

FLUTE

Antonia Kiouis
Jiajia Li
Sara Moorhouse
Jennifer Pigott

OBOE

Yi-Tan Chen
Helena Choi
Christine Hudson
Lissa Mangano

CLARINET

Mark Dimitroff
Gabriel Estrin
Thomas Grant
Alix Haywood (bass)
Tun Man Ho (alto)
Brenda Hsieh
Jovana Rosic
John Williams
Elizabeth Fellows (bass)

BASSOON

Iraj Tamadon-Nejad
Devin Wesley

SAXOPHONE

Tristan De Borba
Kayla Garrett
Allison Prole
Jamie Wilkie

HORN

Adam Gaw
Karina Hueber
Marina Krickler
Nealee Riemer
Courtney Sherk

TRUMPET

Jodi Allen
Ryan Brouwer
Rachel Malach
Matthew McCrady
Lynn Peterson
Jason Young

TROMBONE

David Doddington
Ned Loach
Jessica Reese
Annemieke Vanderkraay

EUPHONIUM

Kyla Jemison
Cameron Rawlins

TUBA

Ian Feenstra
Jacky Siu

PERCUSSION

Allison Bent
Andrew Dunsmore
Charles MacLeod
Kyoko Ogoda
Maya Postepski

HARP

Andrew Chan

PIANO/ORGAN

Roger Yuen

CONTRABASS

Sean King

VIOLONCELLO

Bryan Holt

Fred Perruzza, *Director, Theatre Operations*
Ian Albright, *Technical Assistant*
Bob Dunkin, *Production Assistant*

BIOGRAPHY

Gillian MacKay is an Associate Professor of Music of the University of Toronto, where she conducts wind ensembles, and teaches conducting, trumpet, and music education. An award-winning teacher, Dr. MacKay has an active career as an adjudicator, conductor, and clinician throughout Canada and the United States.

As a trumpeter, she is busy as a recitalist, orchestral player, and chamber musician. Gillian holds degrees and diplomas from the University of Lethbridge, McGill University, the University of Calgary, and Northwestern University. She has held previous faculty positions at the University of Windsor and Medicine Hat College.



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